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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 WARSAW 000261

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SUBJECT: SCENESETTER FOR SECRETARY NAPOLITANO'S MARCH 15
MEETING WITH POLISH INTERIOR MINISTER SCHETYNA

REF: 08 WARSAW 1280 (NOTAL)

Classified By: Ambassador Ashe for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) SUMMARY. Deputy Prime Minister/Interior Minister Minister Grzegorz Schetyna is interested in expanding cooperation with the new Obama administration. Your meeting with Schetyna is an opportunity to extend already strong U.S.-Polish security cooperation to other spheres, including counterterrorism and law enforcement. Schetyna is Prime Minister Tusk's close friend and right-hand man, the behind-the-scenes party organizer who complements Tusk's masterful role as the public face of the government and the governing center-right, pro-business Civic Platform (PO) party. Schetyna is a leading candidate to succeed Tusk as Prime Minister. He will likely raise Poland's continued strong interest in participating in the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) and the status of their proposed agreement for broad law enforcement cooperation. He may also express concern about allegations that Poles are mistreated at U.S. ports of entry. END SUMMARY.

A NEW START

12. (C) No fan of the previous administration, Deputy Prime Minister/Interior Minister Schetyna has repeatedly expressed interest in expanding cooperation with the Obama administration. Your meeting is an opportunity to begin to extend already strong U.S.-Polish security cooperation to other spheres, including counterterrorism and law enforcement. Schetyna may even raise with you his Ministry's interest in negotiating an agreement on preventing and combating serious crime (see para 8). Since Poland is increasingly adept at building coalitions with other EU member states and working the Brussels bureaucracy, increased dialogue with the Poles could enhance U.S. influence on EU Justice and Home Affairs issues.

WHO IS GRZEGORZ SCHETYNA?

13. (C) Grzegorz Schetyna was appointed Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Internal Affairs and Administration by Prime Minister Donald Tusk in November 2007. As Secretary General of the governing center-right, pro-business Civic Platform (PO) party, he plays a key role in decision-making on all organizational matters. He has been a Member of Parliament since 1997. Schetyna is Tusk's right-hand man, the behind-the-scenes party organizer who complements Tusk's masterful role as the public face of the government and the party. He is one of Tusk's closest friends -- and, from time

to time, his friendly rival.

¶4. (C) Schetyna is considered one of the leading candidates to succeed Prime Minister Tusk, who will be his party's candidate for President in 2010. Tusk, whose popularity in public opinion polls drifts between 50 and 60 percent, has stopped short of anointing a successor, in part because he does not want to seem presumptuous about his chances for the presidency and in part to maintain his now solid control of the government and his party.

WIDE RANGE OF INFLUENCE

¶5. (C) Schetyna's responsibilities within the Polish Government extend beyond those of a traditional European interior minister. As the head of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration, Schetyna is responsible for managing the Polish government's entire public administration apparatus, in addition coordinating counterterrorism policy and overseeing Polish law enforcement, border guards, crisis and emergency management, public safety, critical infrastructure protection, and ethnic and religious minority issues. Because Schetyna is dual-hatted as Deputy Prime Minister, he delegates many of these responsibilities to his deputy ministers. In hopes of attaining a more American-like responsiveness from Polish government institutions, Schetyna has been a driving force behind GOP decentralization legislation.

¶6. (C) His strong interest in forging closer law enforcement connections to the U.S. in part reflects Schetyna's desire to

WARSAW 00000261 002 OF 003

edge out domestic law enforcement rivals. The leaders of the Anti-Corruption Bureau (CBA) are holdover appointees from the previous government, and there are constant media reports of CBA-Interior Ministry rivalry. Such reports even include claims that the rival officials surveil each other.

THE PERSISTENT IRRITANT - VISA WAIVER PROGRAM

¶7. (C) Although GOP officials including Prime Minister Tusk have said they will no longer ask the U.S. for Poland's inclusion in the Visa Waiver Program (VWP), it is likely that Schetyna will raise the issue. In his annual speech to Parliament, Foreign Minister Sikorski called Poland's ongoing exclusion one of the main failures of Polish foreign policy over the past year. Sikorski also drew attention in his speech to allegedly rough treatment of Polish citizens at U.S. ports of entry, which your Agency has worked to address in a very timely manner.

HSPD-6 AND THE POLISH COUNTERPROPOSAL

¶8. (C) When the USG proposed an HSPD-6 Agreement with Poland, it was widely understood by the GOP as a necessary step toward VWP qualification. The GOP responded enthusiastically, but with a counterproposal for a more broad-ranging agreement on counterterrorism and law enforcement cooperation (ref A). Because countries close to qualifying for the VWP are HSPD-6 priorities, and because the GOP counterproposal cuts across State, DOJ and DHS responsibilities, work on the HSPD-6 agreement with Poland has come to a halt. Because Schetyna continues to see a strong link between the HSPD-6 agreement and Poland's participation in the VWP, we expect he will raise the GOP counterproposal with you. Should he do so, you may want to suggest that Poland and the U.S. instead negotiate an agreement on preventing and combating serious crime (PCSC), similar to agreements the U.S. has negotiated with Germany and other EU countries. The PCSC would give the GOP much of what it wants, even though the HSPD-6 and Polish participation in the VWP are no longer on the immediate horizon.

ALLEGED MISTREATMENT OF POLES

¶9. (C) Schetyna may also raise GOP concerns about treatment of Polish citizens at U.S. ports of entry. In January 2009, CBP denied entry to several elderly Polish women in Newark, because of prior immigration violations. The Polish media reported that the women were strip-searched, handcuffed and shackled, denied access to medication, and not allowed to communicate with the Polish consulate. The Embassy and DHS component representatives from Warsaw and Frankfurt met with the Human Rights Ombudsman and the MFA to provide a more accurate description of what had happened (based on DHS case notes). Nevertheless, the Polish government is particularly concerned about the handcuffing of the women while in transit to a detention facility. In response, ICE/DRO reiterated the current policy of exercising appropriate discretion by not handcuffing women and minors (absent a compelling reason), and ICE and CBP are also coordinating a tour of U.S. inspection and detention facilities for Polish consular personnel in New York and Chicago.

STRONG BILATERAL COOPERATION

¶10. (C) The Embassy, the Illinois National Guard State Partnership Program, and Polish government agencies have initiated a five-year project to enhance Poland's terrorism and disaster response capabilities. The civilian-military cooperation program focuses on consequence management and developing expertise on critical infrastructure protection. DHS is working with the Illinois National Guard on a Polish delegation's visit to Chicago in May or June. DHS has offered to work with Poland on security preparations for special events (e.g., the Euro2012 soccer cup). This may include training in Poland with a follow-up visit to Washington, DC.

¶11. (C) DHS has been actively engaged with Poland on improving aviation security through the Immigration Advisory Program (IAP) and helping Poland stand-up an Air Marshals

WARSAW 00000261 003 OF 003

program. Poland was one of the first countries to host a CBP IAP team, which has been at the Warsaw airport since September 2004. Unlike most other countries, Poland was selected primarily in order to help it better qualify for the Visa Waiver Program by reducing illegal immigration. We are proud of the accomplishments of this program and encourage its continuation. DHS trained the Polish Border Guards at the United States Federal Air Marshal Academy in Atlantic City and an MOU is currently pending approval that would allow reciprocal rights for Polish and U.S. Air Marshals.
ASHE